

Health Promotion in Motion

April is Cancer Control Month

What is Cancer?

- Cancer starts when abnormal cells in the body grow out of control.
- Cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body through the blood and lymph systems. The lymph system includes clear fluid that helps fight infections.

Cancer Facts for New Hampshire

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States and in New Hampshire; heart disease is first. In New Hampshire, the most common cancers for . . .

- Men: prostate (30%), lung (15%), and colorectal (11%).
- Women: breast (28%), lung (13%), and colorectal (11%).

What You Can Do

The sooner a cancer is found and treated, the better the chances are that the treatment will be a success. Cancer Control Month is an excellent time to:

- Ask your health care provider to **explain your risks** (if any) for certain cancers.
- Adopt **healthy habits** that will reduce your cancer risk.
- Learn about **screenings** that help find and prevent cancer.
- Learn the **signs, symptoms, and risk factors** of the most common cancers.



Healthy Habits to Reduce Your Cancer Risk

Reduce your risk of certain cancers – live a healthy lifestyle that includes:

- No tobacco products or secondhand smoke.
- Lots of fruits and vegetables every day.
- A low-fat diet.
- Daily activity – aim for 30 minutes a day.
- A healthy weight.
- Protection from the sun's ultraviolet light.
- Reduced exposure to radon gas.

Cancer Screening

The sooner a cancer is found and treated, the better the chances are that the treatment will be a success. Screening tests help find cancer early. The American Cancer Society recommends the following tests. Ask your healthcare provider when you should get them:

- Colonoscopy – a colorectal cancer screening (for men and women)
- Mammography and clinical breast exam (for women) – a breast cancer screening
- Pap test (for women) – cervical cancer screening
- PSA test (for men) – a prostate cancer blood test

Signs and Symptoms for the Most Common Cancers

The signs and symptoms listed below are the more common ones seen with cancer. Many others are less common and are not listed here. **If you notice any major changes in your body or the way you feel, tell your healthcare provider – especially if it lasts for a long time or gets worse.** If it's not cancer, your healthcare provider can still treat it, if needed. If it is cancer, you'll give yourself the best chance to have it treated early, when treatment is most likely to succeed.



Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have any of these signs or symptoms. Remember, if you have any of these, it does not mean that you have cancer. Many other illnesses can cause these same signs and symptoms.

- Change in bowel habits
- Change in bladder function
- Sores that do not heal
- Unusual bleeding or discharge
- Thickening or lump in breast or other parts of the body
- Indigestion or trouble swallowing
- Recent change in a wart or mole
- Nagging cough or hoarseness

Cancer Prevention and Screening Resources

For more information about cancer prevention and screening, visit:

- American Cancer Society: www.cancer.org
- Cancer Information Service, New England: www.cancer.gov/CIS
- National Cancer Institute (NCI): www.cancer.gov
- National Comprehensive Cancer Network: www.nccn.org

Cancer Control and Prevention in NH

- Over 100 individuals and organizations have formed the NH Cancer Control Collaboration to address the goals and objectives of the NH Comprehensive Cancer Plan. For more info, go to: www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dhhs/cdpc.
- The Collaboration focuses on the five types of cancer that cause more than half of all cancer deaths in the state:
 - Breast
 - Colorectal
 - Prostate
 - Skin
 - Lung

